

# IDENTIFICATION OF GRAVES AND MAPPING OF THE GOODWYN CEMETERY, RICHLAND CO., SOUTH CAROLINA



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Research Contribution 539

# **IDENTIFICATION OF GRAVES AND MAPPING OF THE GOODWYN CEMETERY, RICHLAND CO., SOUTH CAROLINA**

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Goodwyn Cemetery Documentation Project  
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## **CHICORA RESEARCH CONTRIBUTION 539**



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## MANAGEMENT SUMMARY

Between April 18 and 22, 2011 Chicora Foundation personnel conducted a field investigation of the African American Goodwyn Cemetery situated in the Hopkins area of lower Richland County, South Carolina. Like most African American burial grounds, the history of the cemetery is not well understood, but it is possible that the cemetery was used by enslaved blacks during the late antebellum. By the late nineteenth century the cemetery was associated with the nearby St. John Baptist Church. While still known to local African Americans, the last burials in the cemetery occurred in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

Families known to be buried in the cemetery based on the presence of marked graves include Denley, Evans, Gibson, Hopkins, Jones, Lowman, McKenzie, Moody, Nathern, Riley, Wells, and Weston.

It is reported that the Honorable William Lowman, who served as a Representative in the South Carolina House is buried in this cemetery. Although the grave is unmarked, many of his family members are present and Lowman was a pastor at St. John Baptist Church, so his burial here is likely.

It has also been reported that white plantation owner Keziah Goodwyn Hopkins Brevard is also buried in this cemetery. This is unlikely and the confusion is the result of her burial at the Goodwyn family cemetery nearly Lykesland, South Carolina.

A total of 68 marked graves present in the cemetery. In addition, 101 unmarked graves were identified during this project. All of these graves have been added to a map of the cemetery.

The cemetery has also been recorded as 38RD1373 at the South Carolina Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology. The documented cemetery measures about 240 by 280 feet; we

recommend adding a 50 foot buffer on all sides, bringing the cemetery to about 340 by 380 feet or about 3.0 acre.



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# Introduction

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The Goodwyn Cemetery is an African American burial ground situated in lower Richland County in central South Carolina, about 1.5 miles southeast of the old Hopkins community (Figures 1 and 2). It has been assigned the archaeological site number 38RD1373.

The cemetery is situated on a sandy bluff overlooking Cabin Branch to the west and about 2,500 feet due east of the St. Johns Baptist Church

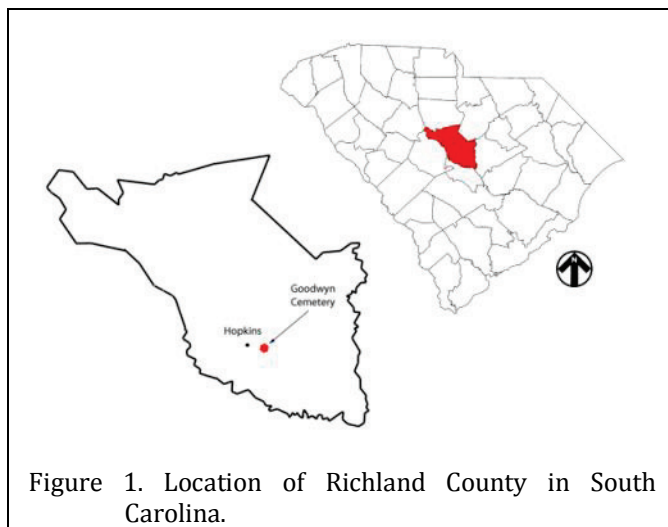


Figure 1. Location of Richland County in South Carolina.

off Clarkson Road. The surrounding area is today wooded, although much of it has been cultivated in the past. Topography is level and the vegetation includes pine and mixed hardwoods.

Although the cemetery, on parcel R24400-01-27, is owned by Any Associates, Inc., whose registered agent with the S.C. Secretary of State is Abdalla Yaghy, access takes visitors across properties owned by Wendy D. Davis and Linda D. Harris (R24400-01-56) and Willie Waldo (R24400-01-25).

The Richland County Conservation Commission awarded a grant in 2009,

administered by South East Rural Community Outreach (SERCO), to assist in the documentation and preservation of the cemetery. Work thus far has included listing the cemetery on the Richland County Cultural Resources Inventory, compiling an inventory of stones, and working with several USC students to compile death certificates for individuals buried in the cemetery.

Chicora Foundation was contacted by Deborah Scott Brooks in late March 2011, requesting our assistance in determining unmarked graves as well as mapping the cemetery. We met Ms. Brooks and her colleague, Marie Barber Adams, on April 18, 2011. Also present was Thomas Gunter with SERCO.

During this visit the cemetery was walked and it became clear that a large number of sunken graves were present, spread out over an area much larger than that associated with visibly marked graves. We also discovered that, typical of African American burial grounds, graves tended to be clustered in what were likely kin-based groups.

During that visit we discussed methods for identifying unmarked graves, options for clearing the cemetery, and mapping. Subsequently, Chicora personnel Debi Hacker, Nicole Southerland, and Michael Trinkley identified unmarked graves and prepared a map of the cemetery. This work extended over the period from April 18 through April 22, 2011.

## Brief History

Detailed historical research was not included in the scope of this project. Thus, this brief survey primarily reviews readily available secondary sources. We have recorded the cemetery with S.C. Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology as site number 38RD1373. We also



## INTRODUCTION

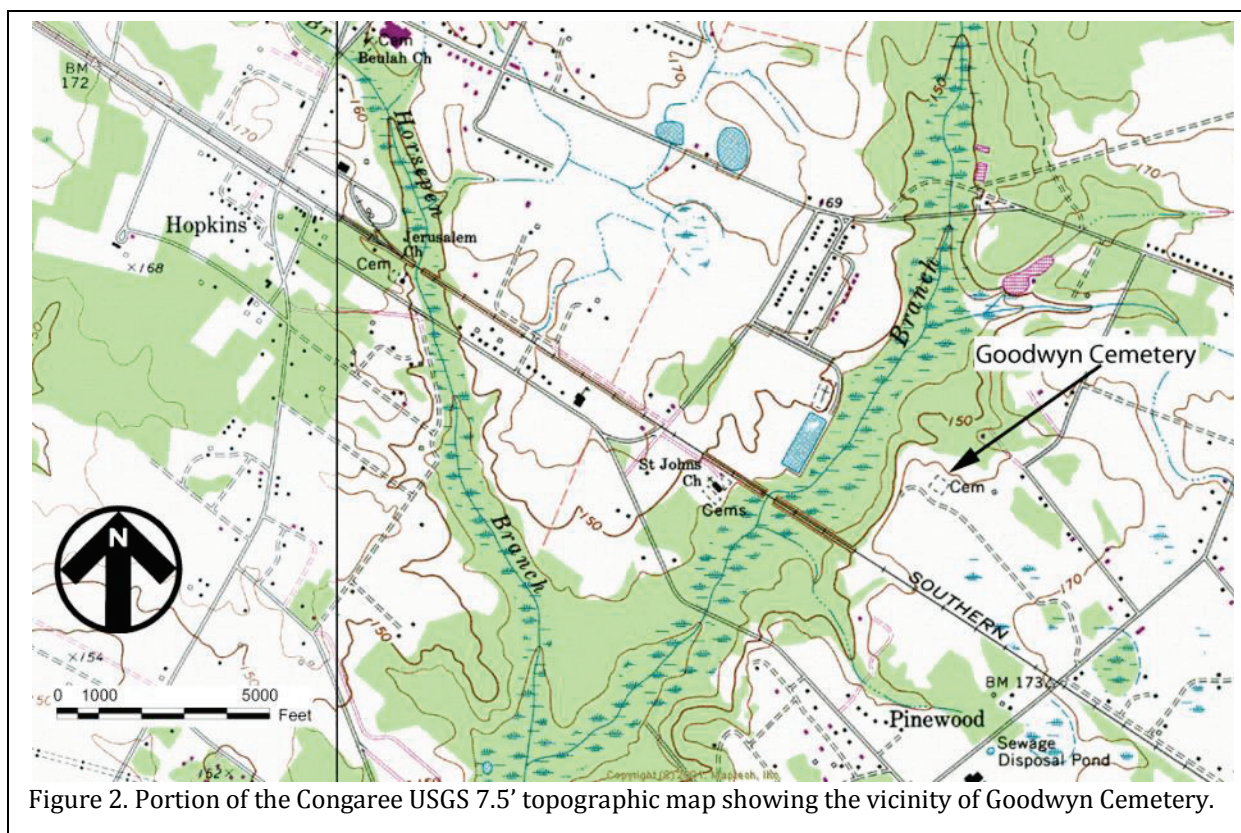


Figure 2. Portion of the Congaree USGS 7.5' topographic map showing the vicinity of Goodwyn Cemetery.

note that the cemetery is included in the Richland County Cultural Resources Inventory Listing as "Goodwyn Cemetery." That document reports,

Goodwyn Cemetery contains gravesites dating back to the early 1800's. There are printed references of plantation owner, Mrs. Keziah Goodwyn Hopkins Brevard and her husband being buried on the site. Rev. William Lowman, a former slave of Robert Adams and former member of the SC House of Representatives during Reconstruction, is reported to be buried on the site. Rev. Lowman died in 1898. South East Rural Community Outreach (SERCO) has also documented that some persons buried there as having been members of the military. (<http://historicrichlandcountysc.com/SELECTED-RICHLAND-COUNTY-HISTORIC-SITE-REPORT.php?id=141&photos=false>).

[com/SELECTED-RICHLAND-COUNTY-HISTORIC-SITE-REPORT.php?id=141&photos=false](http://historicrichlandcountysc.com/SELECTED-RICHLAND-COUNTY-HISTORIC-SITE-REPORT.php?id=141&photos=false).

This information is repeated on a variety of additional websites, although none of the documents provide citations.

Unfortunately, the earliest date on a marked grave is that of Herbert Walter, who died in 1917. There are, however, four marked graves of individuals who were born slaves: Sylvia Evans (1845-1924), Mary Davis (1853-1927), Sue Denley (1860-1930), and Jim Nassareth (1862-1927). Although impossible to prove, it seems plausible that this burial ground was used in the antebellum by enslaved African Americans and continued to be used after the Civil War as a local or kin-based burial ground. Whether it was used in the "early 1800s" is not documented.

The comment regarding the burial of Keziah Goodwyn Hopkins Brevard is likely based





Figure 3. Aerial photos for the cemetery vicinity. At the top is the 1939 aerial. Below is the aerial from 1959. The yellow overlay shows modern parcels.

on a brief mention of the Goodwyn Family Cemetery in the Epilogue of John Hammond Moore's *A Plantation Mistress on the Eve of the Civil War*,

In 1868-1870 she [Keziah Goodwyn Hopkins Brevard] sold fourteen acres of land to the heirs of A[braham] S. Rawlinson, her deceased overseer, and acquired from them the Goodwyn Family Cemetery where she and her husband are buried (Moore 1993:118).

It is understandable, but regrettable, that this cemetery has been mistaken for the Goodwyn Cemetery. Hopkins explains,

it is believed that he [William Goodwyn] made his home at the site of the Goodwyn cemetery near Lykesland, South Carolina, approximately one-half mile south of the Seaboard Coastline Railroad. Here is wife and daughter, Keziah (and all of her family) are buried, as are many of his other children. Keziah Goodwyn Hopkins Brevard died in 1886 and was the last person to be buried in the Goodwyn family cemetery (Hopkins 1976:212).

Since that time the cemetery has been extensively damaged by vandalism and what little remains of the stones were transferred to the Hopkins Family Cemetery, although no effort has been made to preserve the stones or the original cemetery. The Hopkins Family Cemetery is situated about 2.2 miles to the west-southwest of the African American Goodwyn Cemetery.

Sadly, little research has been conducted on William Lowman and much of the information that is readily available is incorrect. For example, Bryant (1984:104) reports that Lowman served in the South Carolina House of Representatives from 1868 to 1872, citing the House Journals for those

years. This information is incorrect and there is no mention of Lowman anywhere in these journals. In 2008, Senate Resolution 1466 commemorated Lowman. In this document he is cited as serving from 1874 to 1876, but this, too, is incorrect.

Lowman actually served from November 1876 until March 1878 (Edgar 1974:427). While we have not conducted a complete search of his activities, it is worth mentioning that he sought to make it a criminal offense to mistreat a prisoner at the S.C. Penitentiary.

Lowman appears in the 1880 census, married to Ellen Lowman and having five children (Sucky, 12; Louis, 11; Margirett, 7; Phillis, 5; and Harrison, 1). He listed his occupation as farmer and his age at the time, 29, would suggest that he was born about 1851.

The Senate Resolution reports that his parents were Suckie and John "Jack" Lowman; with his eldest daughter named Sucky, it is entirely reasonable that she was named for her grandmother. Siblings of William include Thomas, Mackie, Francis, and Sue.

The Senate Resolution also reports that Lowman "in 1873 . . . served as a captain in G Company of the South Carolina Militia." There are actually two William Lowmans listed. One is reported as a First Lieutenant in E Company, the other as a Captain in G Company. In both cases the service was in the South Carolina National Guard, not the militia. In addition, the date is based on the captain's date of commission. In any event, we know from the 1880 census that there was also a white William Lowman from Lexington County – so it is uncertain which (or if either) individual is William M. Lowman.

Lowman was the pastor at several churches in the area, including Zion Mill Creek Baptist (1883-1886, 1895-1898), Zion Mount Moriah (1892-1894), St. John Baptist (1875-1885, 1887-1893), and St. Mathew Baptist Church (<http://sciway3.net/clark/richland/zionhill.htm>; <http://sciway3.net/clark/richland/zionmoriah.htm>; [www.stjohnbaptistchurchhopkins.org/aboutus.html](http://www.stjohnbaptistchurchhopkins.org/aboutus.html)).



Given the documented use of the cemetery by the St. John's congregation and the presence of other Lomax family members at Goodwyn Cemetery, it is plausible that William Lowman is buried there. No marker, however, exists.

Figure 3 shows the 1939 aerial of the cemetery vicinity. The cemetery is heavily wooded. To the northeast, northwest, and southeast are fallow fields. To the south is a large cultivated field. There is no obvious road to the cemetery, although there is a road that appears to travel from the railroad corridor north-northeast along the edge of the fields to the cemetery vicinity. This seems consistent with oral history accounts of burials traveling from the church to a dirt road along the edge of the railroad corridor and from there to the cemetery.

Figure 3 also shows this same view in 1959. By this time the cemetery has few trees –

suggesting that the property was logged. To the south is the cultivated field. To the northwest remains a fallow or abandoned field. The pasture or fallow field to the northeast in the 1939 area is reverting to forest by 1959. A road from the railroad crossing the fallow fields to the northwest of the cemetery is more distinct in the 1959 aerial, suggesting that burials were continuing to take the more-or-less traditional route previously described.

## Current Condition

The cemetery today is in generally good condition. Vegetation is consistent with logging ca. 1959 and consists of a few moderately large pines, numerous smaller pines, hardwoods, and a light understory (Figure 5).

Hardwoods are found only in the cemetery area; at the periphery these hardwoods are replaced by pines.

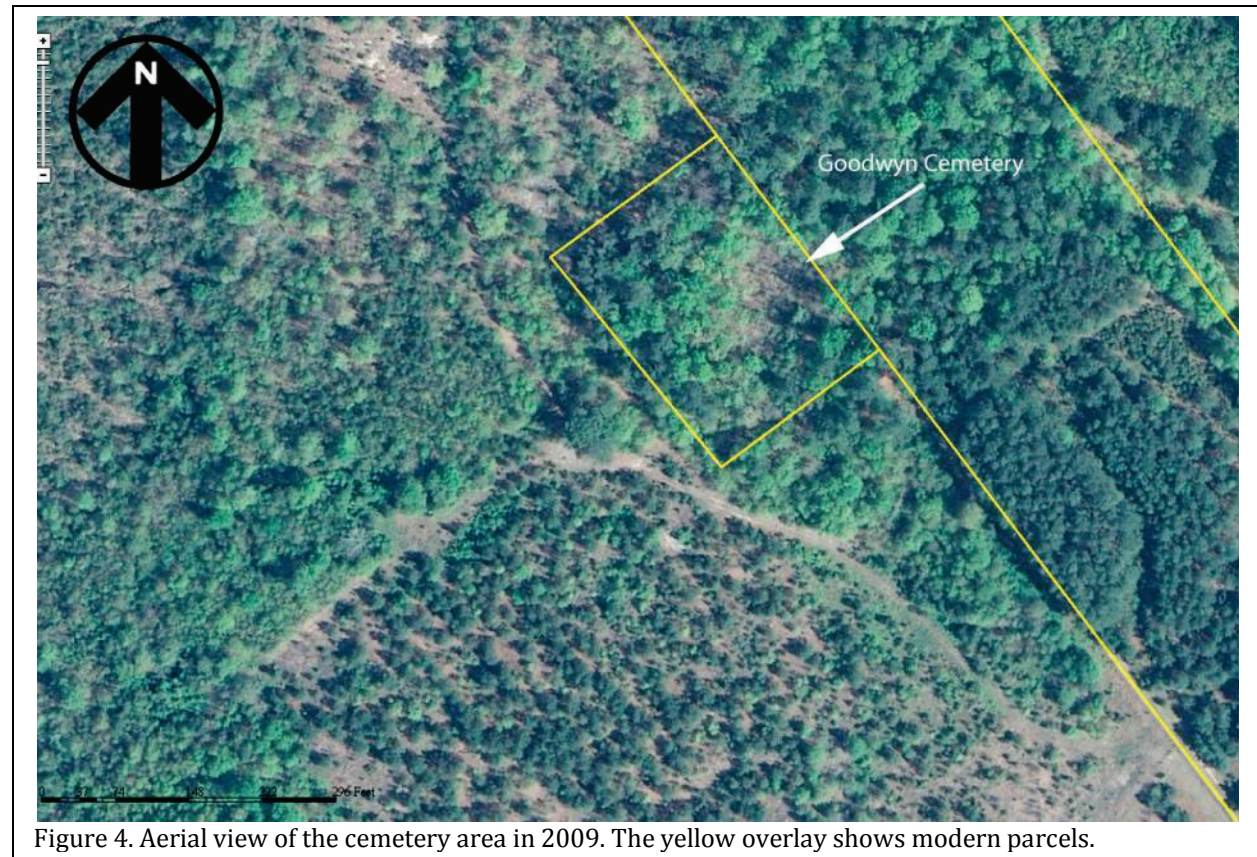


Figure 4. Aerial view of the cemetery area in 2009. The yellow overlay shows modern parcels.





Figure 5. Goodwyn Cemetery showing typical groundcover and the range of pine and hardwood vegetation.

The remnants of corn used to bait deer are found at the eastern edge of the cemetery. A plastic barrel is in this same area. These items are not affecting the physical integrity of the cemetery, but should be removed out of respect. Given the damage that occur to stones by bullets, it would also be appropriate to establish a no hunting buffer around the center, ensuring that any hunt clubs leasing the property are aware of the cemetery and the restrictions.

To the south and southwest of the cemetery is a 4-wheeler trail, probably used by hunters. It does not appear to disturb the cemetery, but care should be taken to ensure that additional trails are not developed on the cemetery.

There is no evidence that any graves or monuments have been vandalized or damaged. There is also no indication of grave goods. This is consistent with the location; grave goods are much more prevalent along the coast of South Carolina and Georgia, declining in prevalence as one moves into the interior.

## Methods

Initially we anticipated using a penetrometer to identify unmarked graves. However, upon visiting the cemetery we found that graves were typically sunken, clearly marking those without commercial monuments. This is a natural process where vaults are not used, wooden caskets or coffins are common, and graves have not been periodically infilled. As the casket and body decompose the grave collapses or sinks, resulting in a depression.

Commercial markers or funeral home plates were marked using a surveyor's pin flag and numbered sequentially. These flags were left in place after the completion of this work. The names on the markers, where legible (many of the funeral home markers have no legible name remaining), were recorded as part of the project.

Unmarked graves were identified by a single strip of survey paint lengthwise down the grave. As these graves were mapped, an "x" was

placed in the middle of the line to signify that the grave had been picked up.

Mapping was conducted using a Sokkia 530R3 Total Station. This instrument ensures a very high level of precision. As control points we used the fence posts to the southeast of the cemetery.

In addition to mapping marked and unmarked graves, we also plotted living memorials. At the time of this survey the only such memorials in evidence were several yucca plants (*Yucca filamentosa*) and spirea (*Spirea* spp.). We recommend that the cemetery be visited when bulb plants are likely to be blooming since African American cemeteries often include numbers of daffodils (*Narcissus* spp.) and snow drops (*Galanthus* spp.).

## INTRODUCTION

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# Results and Recommendations

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## Results

Figure 6 shows the map of the Goodwyn Cemetery that includes all of the marked graves found during this assessment, as well as unmarked depressions and living memorials.

We identified 67 marked graves; these do not include the grave of a “Mattie Cahed\_\_\_” that was recorded by Deborah Scott Brooks and Marie Barber Adams in 2009. In spite of a full 8 person hours searching for this fallen stone, it could not be found. However, by using Death Certificates, we were able to identify the individual as Mattie Canedy, who died on May 1, 1928 and is listed as buried in “Goodwin Cemetery” (Richland County Death Certificate 9232).

Of the 68 marked graves (including Canedy), 47 (69%) are commercial markers. An additional 21 are funeral home markers, although only 13 provide legible information. There are three funeral home markers that also have commercial markers at the grave. In one case there is a difference between the commercial marker (Janice Lowman Rhineheart) and the funeral home marker (Jencie McKenzie).

Only two funeral homes are identified on the extant markers, Holley and Leevy. The Holley and Sons Funeral Home was founded by William S. and Catherine W. Holley in 1917 in the Gadsden area. Holley also created a Burial Aid Society in lower Richland County that lasted for about 30 years. In 1955, John P. Holley, Sr. renamed the business the J.P. Holley Funeral Home. The Senate Street location in the Waverly area of Columbia, which opened in the 1920s, burned in December 2006, resulting in the loss of many business records (“Funeral Home Destroyed in Fire, Police Suspect Arson at Historic J.P. Holley Building on Senate Street,” *The State*, December

31, 2006).

Leevy’s Funeral Home, on Taylor Street in Columbia, was founded in 1932 by Mr. and Mrs. Isaac Samuel Leevy. He also created a burial aid organization. In 1997, Leevy’s Funeral Home opened its Lower Richland Chapel.

Most of the marked graves at Goodwyn Cemetery are fairly small and simple. Some are tablets, others are die on bases. Many of the monuments are cast cement, including an unusual obelisk form. Typical of African American cemeteries, these cast cement monuments were originally whitewashed and remnants of this original coating are still visible.

Although some concrete monuments were produced using standard molds and often had little decoration other than the cast inscription, many African American cemeteries reveal markers made using homemade molds and exhibiting much greater variation. Since concrete is a plastic medium, it allows considerable deviation from standard forms. Several examples of this deviation are found in Goodwyn Cemetery and include the use of standard emblems, such as shaking hands or cherubs combined with other features (Figure 7).

Grave goods, typical at African American burial grounds on the coasts of South Carolina and Georgia, are absent at Goodwyn Cemetery. Only conventional flower pots and occasional glass vase fragments were encountered. Several graves, also, evidenced one or more wire floral stands.

In addition to the 67 marked graves this study found at least 101 unmarked burials. As Figure 6 reveals, although these graves do suggest rows with some effort to maintain alignments and





organization, they are not homogeneously spread out over the landscape. As observed in other African American cemeteries, the arrangement of graves suggests some degree of kin-based organization.

Orientation is generally northwest-southeast, although some burials are nearly north-south. This seems at odd to the prevailing east-west orientation among most Christians. The prevailing belief is that Christians bury facing the east so the body is prepared to rise up at the time of the second coming and the final summons to judgment. Of course there have been many sun-based religions throughout history and the sun has often been seen as the giver of life. Moreover, many Christian religious beliefs have been modified from earlier “pagan” belief systems, such as the adoption by early Christians of the druid winter solstice festival, which became the Christmas celebration.

In the case of African American burial practices it has also been suggested that the eastern orientation was associated with the desire

to return to Africa. Some graves are thought to be oriented toward the water that would allow the spirit to return to Africa. Thus, there are numerous possible explanations for the orientations seen in African American cemeteries, including Goodwyn. There are also accounts of some shamans, medicine men, or those practicing hoodoo being buried “cross-wise with the world.” Similar burials have been found at other African American cemeteries.

Regardless, it is important to realize that the informal nature of African American burial grounds coupled with the mortuary practices would naturally incorporate considerable variation in orientation depending on the time of day and season of the year.

The cemetery covers an area at least 240 feet east-west by 280 feet north-south or about 1.54 acres. We recommend that a buffer of 50 feet be added on all sides of this to help ensure that there are no outliers that have been missed during this survey. Thus an area about 340 by 380 feet, or 3.0 acres should be set aside for the cemetery.



Figure 7. Two examples of cast cement monuments. Both have been whitewashed.





Figure 8. Use of a yucca as a living memorial.

Richland County should require that any development or activities encroaching on this 3 acre cemetery and buffer be examined by a professional archaeologist with demonstrated expertise in cemetery identification.

## Landscape Issues

There is a desire to “clean up” the cemetery. What this means, however, is difficult to define and once defined must be balanced against long-term maintenance concerns. For example, removing all of the vegetation, including most of the trees, would open the cemetery to much more sun and would likely result in a luxuriant undergrowth with intensive maintenance efforts.

Thus, it is essential that the group have a

clear plan for the long-term maintenance of the property. The level of long-term maintenance that the group can provide should be used to guide the level of clearing that is conducted. In other words, if the group has a significant reservoir of funds and ample, energetic volunteers, it might be appropriate to remove a number of the trees and all of the undergrowth. On the other hand, if there is no long-term funding for the maintenance of the cemetery and most volunteers are elderly, it may be far better to do nothing at the cemetery except perhaps once every 2 to 3 years come in with a brushcutter/clearing saw and remove the underbrush.

Examination of the 1939 aerial image for the cemetery (Figure 3) clearly reveals that during a period of heavy use the cemetery was densely wooded. Thus, leaving the cemetery as it is today would be historically appropriate.

If any sort of clean-up is eventually conducted, it is important to avoid damage or removal of living memorials, such as the yucca, present in the cemetery. During a recent revisit we observed that a very large number of multiflora rambling roses are scattered across the cemetery. These are almost certainly heirloom plants; these multiflora roses tend to bloom for only about 3 weeks and are thus easily overlooked. The work should also take place when flowering bulbs will not be damaged.

It is also important that the caregivers do not use any sort of herbicide in the cemetery. Products such as Round-Up and Garlon 4 are broad spectrum herbicides that can affect not only weedy or brushy plants, but also beneficial plantings and even trees. Because of the salts these products contain they are also detrimental to stones in the cemetery.

The only appropriate use of herbicide in a cemetery is when it is necessary to paint the cut ends of brush or trees to prevent them from

IDENTIFICATION OF GRAVES AND MAPPING OF THE GOODWYN CEMETERY

Table 1.  
Marked Burials at Goodwyn Cemetery (by last name)

#	First	Last	Birth Date	Death Date	Headstone	Footstone	Funeral Home Marker	Notes
1	Mary	Gates	1884	1925	X	X		
2	Emma	Howell		1925	X			SERCA: "James"
3	Mary	Davis	1853	1927	X	X		
4	Luther	Gaillaird		1959	X	X		SERCA: "Gaillaird"
5	Elliott	Goodwin	1882	1927	X			
6	Robert	Jones	1873	1927	X	X		toppled, broken
7	Elener	Sumter	1904	1927	X			
8	Jim	Nassareth	1862	1927	X			toppled
9	Susanna	Weston	1874	1929	X			
10	Cyries	Weston	1875	1939	X	X		
11	B[ ]	S[ ]				X		"B. S."; no headstone found
12	Wright	Denley	1870	1928	X			
13	Sue	Denley	1860	1937	X			
14	Millie	Nazzerey	1866	1920	X			toppled, broken; SERCA: "Netheren"
15	Elliott	Lowman	1907	1962			(Leevy)	
16	Hattie	Lowman	1907	1958	X			
17	Thomas	Lowman	1890	1955	X			
18	Norsessie	Lowman	1880	1931	X	X		SERCA: "Norses"
19	Susie	Milligan	1876	1951	X			
20	Eliza	Hope	1866	1936	X	X		
21	Lula	Hopkins	1900	1946	X	X		
22	Eddie	Hopkins	1896	1946	X	X		
23	Ann	Evans	1880	1940	X			
24	Geo.	Williams	1869	1934	X	X		
25	Gracie	Nathern	1866	1936	X			toppled; SERCA: "Netheran"
26	Charley	Nathern	1885	1935	X	X		
27	Jeff	Riley		1936	X	X		
28	Jane	McKenzie		1937	X	X		
29	Marion, Master	Gibson		1949	X	X		age 14 year
30	Jessie J.	Nazareth		1951	X	X		age 4 month
31	Eliza D., Mrs.	Hubbard	1894	1963			X	
32	Phillip D.	Wells	1916	1958			(Leevy)	
33	Lewis A., Rev.	Lowman		1936	X			
34	James	Riley	1887	1960	X			(military stone)
35	Hariett	Taylor	1867	1932	X			toppled
36	Annie	Jones		1969			(Holley)	
37	UID						X	
38	UID						X	
39	Hager M., Mrs.	Gibson		1955	X			
40	Peter	Moody		1970			(Holley)	
41	Janie	Moody		1969			(Holley)	
42	Henry	Moody	1922	1967			(Leevy)	
43	Paul Douglas, Jr.	Wells	1939	1965	X		& X	(military stone)
44	Eugenia	Lowman	1880	1963	X		& X	
45	George	Evans	1920	1945	X			(military stone)
46	UID						X	& wreath holder
47	UID						X	
48	Joella	McKenzie	1915	1956			(Leevy)	SERCA: "Deila"
49	Tam[ ], Mrs.	[ ]		196[ ]			X	SERCA: "Tempe Lowman Davis d. 1963"
50	Estelle	Moore		1964			(Holley)	
51	Charlie	Evans	1918	1961			(Leevy)	
52	Janice Lowman	Rhineheart	1885	1971	X	X	& X	FHM= Jencie McKenzie
53	Lula Mae	McKenzie		1970			(Holley)	
54	Willie	Nathan		1925	X	X		toppled, broken
55	James, Little	Belton, Jr.		1955			(Holley)	
56	Tabby	Hopkin	1869	1937	X	X		(Tabathy)
57	Albert	Hopkins	1892	1925	X			son of Henry & Tabathy
58	UID				X			granite block at head
59	Angerline	Jones	1901	1925	X	X		
60	Jerry	Jones	1872	1918	X	X		in plot w/ corners, chain & spirea
61	Pleasant	Jones	1881	1920	X	X		in plot w/ corners, chain & spirea
62	Herbert	Walter	1886	1917	X			"Corpl US Army"; concrete obelisk
100/63	UID						X	
101/64	Jacob	Lowman	1900	1963			(Leevy)	
102/65	Sylvia	Evans	1845	1924	X	X		
106/66	UID						X	
107/67	UID						X	

## RESULTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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suckering.

We do recommend the removal of about 13 diseased or badly damaged pine trees. In all cases the trees are hazardous to people visiting the cemetery, as well as the stones. Because of the very high liability created by these hazardous trees, we recommend this work receive a high priority. To assist, we have marked all of the trees that should be removed with fluorescent paint.

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**Historical Research**

**Identification of Grave Locations  
and Mapping**

**Condition Assessments**

**Treatment of Stone and Ironwork**



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